

midtown M E S S E N G E R

Volume 8, Issue 47

November 23, 2025

I Thank God in Hard Times and for Hard Times

By: David Sproule

If there was ever a Christian who faced hard times in his life, the apostle Paul would surely be at the top of that list. He listed many of the sufferings that he endured as a disciple of Christ (in 2 Cor. 11:23-28), among which was, “in prisons more frequently.” When Paul wrote about frequently being in prison, that was before he was arrested and imprisoned in Jerusalem and for two years in Caesarea, and it was about five years before he was imprisoned in Rome for two years.

If you had spent as many nights (even years) as Paul had in prison, what would your attitude be toward God? Would you be angry with God? Would you be blaming God? Would you tell others to be wary of God? Read the book of Philippians. Paul writes this epistle while a prisoner in Rome. Do you want to see what he thinks about God after all that he had endured? He wanted that church to have a clear picture of the God that he served and for whom he was in prison.

Paul begins by saying, “I thank my God” (Phil. 1:3). Would you do that? Do you thank God for your trials (cf. Jas. 1:2-4)? For what did Paul have to be thankful to God?

God will complete His work in you (1:6). You are a piece of clay in the Potter’s hand (Isa. 64:8). Trust Him.

God has saved you (1:28). Others want to harm or discourage you, but God has delivered you (Psa. 34:17-19).

God humbled Himself and died on the cross for you (Phil. 2:6-8). The one who existed as God from the beginning “emptied Himself” to “the point of death...on a cross.” There is no greater demonstration of His love (John 15:13).

God works in you (2:12-13). God expects you to “work out your own salvation,” but He does not leave you to do that on your own. His strength (Eph. 6:10) and direction (Psa. 119:105) are ever with you.

God calls you to heaven (3:14). We must give up much for Him (3:3-13; Rom. 12:1), but it is His “upward call” that provides the motivation (3:20-21).

God gives you His peace (4:6-7). When you put your anxiety aside and lay your burdens on Him, His peace (John 14:27) soothes the soul (Psa. 46).

God will be with you (4:9). While others may abandon you (Mark 14:50), God never will (Heb. 13:5). His ever-abiding presence gives you strength and courage (Josh. 1:5-9).

God will supply all your need (4:19). He cares for the birds and the flowers, and He cares even more for you (Matt. 6:25-34). You “shall not lack any good thing” (Psa. 34:10).

No wonder Paul ends the letter by saying, “Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever” (4:20).

Seeing By Faith, Not By Sight

By: Selected

Paul's description of how saints see the world explains so much about how differently we look at all that is happening when compared to most of those around us. He said, "We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:18). We are truly different from those in the world.

There is so much change in all that is happening. Because our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20), we view the world and political situations in a different way. The contrast between Daniel and King Nebuchadnezzar is so striking. While the king thought he was so important, Daniel told him, "The Most High rules in the affairs of men..." (Dan. 4:17). Our citizenship is in heaven, and God is in charge of all things.

We look at our workplace in a way the world will not understand. The world says, "Get a great job, make your career the most important aspect of life and enjoy life." That view of life was expressed by the man who said to himself, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink and be merry" (Luke 12:19). Read this story, meditate on it and you will understand why Jesus said that this view of life is the view of those who are fools.

The world says, "Labor with your hands that you may have." God commands us to work for a far different reason. He says, "Labor with your hands that you may have something to give him who has need" (Eph. 4:28). The judgment scene describes those who failed to help Jesus who lived in their world and was a stranger, naked, unclothed, sick and in prison. Jesus said that the way they treated the least of His brethren was the way they were treating Him. (Matt. 25:31-41).

Finally, we look at life, especially as we approach death, so differently. Look first at the ungodly who watched Stephen as he was dying. They were hurling stones at him and were glad to see him taking his last breath. Paul was there and shared the hearts of those who were happy to see it happen (Acts 7:54-60). They were so wrong.

Now look at how Stephen viewed his death. He saw Jesus standing in heaven and watching as he was crying out to God, "Lord Jesus, receive my soul." While we may not die as martyrs, we can view our death in this same way, with hearts that do not walk by sight, but by faith. The world views death as an end. We do not see it as the end, but as the beginning of what we have lived for every day.

Thank God that He helps us see the world in a far different way! We truly walk by faith and not by sight.



Upcoming Events

Sun. Dec. 7: Monthly potluck luncheon after morning service with a 12:45 afternoon service. Please bring a covered dish/dessert.

Sun. Dec. 14: Youth devo at the McCoy home after evening worship. Boys bring drinks, girls bring desserts.

Sun. Dec. 21: White Elephant fellowship after evening worship.

Sat. Jan. 17, 2026: Midtown will host Ladies Day with speaker Erin Tanner. Registration begins at 8:30am.

February 20-22, 2026: Midtown's Youth Winter Retreat. More details to come.

Area events:

Area events/details are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. Please check them out.

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Jerry FitzSimmons is in DeTar and began dialysis treatments last week.

Janie Garcia, co-worker of Nicolette Garcia, who has stage 1 colon cancer and is having surgery this month.

Members

Jeff Cannady, Jerry FitzSimmons, and Veronica Serenil.

VISITORS:

Thank you for visiting today. Please take a moment to scan this QR Code to fill out a visitor card. We would love to have a record of your attendance.



Service Roster

Week of November 23, 2025

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading Kanin Jacobs
Song Leader Doug Jobes

Opening Prayer Jake Jacobs

Closing Prayer Clifton Rutherford

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread James Cammock
Cup Ron White
Offering Bryant Siegel
Assist Blake Jacobs
Assist Luke FitzSimmons
Assist Caleb Lehtinen

Sunday Evening

Song Leader Jeff Cannady

Opening Prayer Bryant Siegel

Closing Prayer Mark FitzSimmons

Lord's Supper & Offering Ron White/
James Cammock

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class Cody McCoy
Song Leader Richard Hill
Devotional James Cammock

Other

Prepare Communion for Nov Elana Carroll

Congregational News This Week

Birthdays

Sandi Fricks Nov. 25

Anniversaries

Bryce & Barbie Dolan Nov. 27

If you have any prayer requests, upcoming events to be announced, or updates/corrections please contact our secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030 or email office.midtownchurch@gmail.com

Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons
Ron White

Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism
Lupe Escojido—Benevolence
Doug Jobes—Safety, Men's Encouragement &
Winter Youth Retreat
Kevin Sheeran—Worship Organization and
Communication
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

Our Minister

Cody McCoy

Weekly Reading

But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased
and said to them, "Let the little children come to
Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the
kingdom of God."

Mark 10:14

Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....	9:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship.....	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship.....	5:00 P.M.
Wednesday Bible Class.....	7:00 P.M.

Attendance Records

Week of November 16, 2025

A.M. Bible Class.....	63
A.M. Worship.....	98
P.M. Worship.....	54
Wednesday Worship.....	70

*Financial information is located on the bulletin
board in the hallway.*

Supported Works

John & Carla Moore Bible Land Passages



5901 N. Main
Victoria, TX 77904
361-573-0030

midtowncoc.org

Weekly Communication! To receive the *Midtown Messenger* and other congregational news to your inbox each week, please email events.midtowncoc@gmail.com.